



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Committee Bill No. 5799

LCO No. 4762

* _____HB05799VA_PS_030107_____*

Referred to Committee on Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Introduced by:
(VA)

***AN ACT CREATING A LATINO AND HISPANIC AFFAIRS ADVOCATE
POSITION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 27-102l of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2007*):

3 (a) There shall be a Department of Veterans' Affairs. The Veterans'
4 Home shall be within the department and shall be located in Rocky
5 Hill. The department head shall be the Commissioner of Veterans'
6 Affairs, who shall be appointed by the Governor in accordance with
7 the provisions of sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive, with the powers and
8 duties prescribed therein.

9 (b) The commissioner may appoint a unit head to administer a
10 veterans' advocacy and assistance unit for the aid and benefit of
11 veterans, their spouses and eligible dependents and family members.
12 The unit shall have a staff of not less than eight men and women,
13 including six service officers, and clerical personnel. The unit head and
14 the service officers shall be veterans, as defined in section 27-103, or
15 veterans who were awarded the armed forces expeditionary medal for

16 service by the armed forces. At least one of the service officers shall be
17 a woman having a demonstrated interest in the concerns of women
18 veterans, who shall be responsible for addressing those concerns, and
19 at least one of the service officers shall be an individual having a
20 demonstrated interest in the concerns of Latino and Hispanic veterans,
21 who shall be responsible for addressing those concerns. Each service
22 officer shall successfully complete a course in veterans' benefits within
23 one year of commencement of employment and shall be assigned to
24 one of the five congressional districts of the state.

25 (c) In addition to the powers and duties prescribed under section 4-
26 8, the commissioner shall have the following powers and duties:

27 (1) To prepare studies and collect information concerning facilities
28 and services available to members of the armed forces, veterans, their
29 spouses or eligible dependents, including facilities and services for
30 veterans who may have been exposed to a Vietnam herbicide during
31 their periods of military service;

32 (2) To conduct interviews in the nursing homes or hospitals
33 throughout the state to determine the number of veterans admitted
34 and ascertaining which benefits such veterans are currently receiving
35 and are entitled to receive;

36 (3) To cooperate with service agencies and organizations
37 throughout the state in disseminating and furnishing counsel and
38 assistance of benefit to residents of this state who are or have been
39 members of the armed forces, their spouses or eligible dependents,
40 which will indicate the availability of: (A) Educational training and
41 retraining facilities; (B) health, medical, rehabilitation and housing
42 services and facilities; (C) employment and reemployment services; (D)
43 provisions of federal, state and local laws affording financial rights,
44 privileges and benefits; and (E) other matters of similar nature;

45 (4) To assist veterans, their spouses and eligible dependents and
46 family members in the preparation, presentation, proof and

47 establishment of such claims, privileges, rights and other benefits
48 accruing to them under federal, state and local laws;

49 (5) To cooperate with all national, state and local governmental and
50 private agencies securing or offering services or any benefits to
51 veterans, their spouses or dependents;

52 (6) To develop and prepare a long-range plan and mission statement
53 for the Veterans' Home and the veterans' advocacy and assistance unit;
54 and

55 (7) To review all appeals made by veterans, their spouses or eligible
56 dependents or family members and render the final decision thereon
57 regarding the denial of admission to any program or the refusal to
58 render any service or benefit which is administered by the Department
59 of Veterans' Affairs, the discharge or transfer from any such program
60 or any disciplinary action taken while participating in any such
61 program.

62 (d) The commissioner shall adopt, in accordance with the provisions
63 of chapter 54, and enforce, such regulations and procedures for the
64 operation, administration and management of the department and all
65 programs and services under the jurisdiction of the department,
66 including, but not limited to, procedures relating to admission and
67 discharge or transfer of veterans in the Veterans' Home, a per diem fee
68 schedule for programs, services and benefits provided by the Veterans'
69 Home, and the participation of eligible family members in programs or
70 services provided by the home.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2007	27-102l

VA

Joint Favorable C/R

PS